



600 MARYLAND AVENUE, SW
SUITE 100 WEST
WASHINGTON, DC 20024-2571
202 651-7000 • FAX 202 651-7001
<http://www.nursingworld.org>

MARY E. FOLEY, MS, RN
PRESIDENT

LINDA J. STIERLE, MSN, RN, CNAA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

July 11, 2001

JUL 13 2001

Dear Representative:

I am writing to express the American Nurses Association's (ANA's) strong support for the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act of 2001. ANA is the national professional association representing registered nurses in all practice settings. Numbering nearly 2.7 million, RNs are the nation's largest health care workforce.

ANA is pleased to endorse this bill and is encouraged by the cooperation and compromises made to achieve real progress on managed care reform in the Senate. This legislation constitutes an important step in assuring that strong, comprehensive, and enforceable protections will be in place for all insured Americans.

ANA believes that every individual should have access to health care services along the full continuum of care and be an empowered partner in making health care decisions. Given the nursing profession's preeminent role in patient advocacy, ANA is particularly heartened by the steps proposed to protect registered nurses and other health care professionals from retaliation when they advocate for their patients' health and safety. As the nation's foremost patient advocates, registered nurses need to be able to speak up about inappropriate or inadequate care that would harm their patients. Nurses at the bedside know exactly what happens when care is denied, comes too late or is so inadequate that it leads to inexcusable suffering, which is why the strong whistleblower protection language in this bill is critical to patient protection legislation.

ANA also believes that accountability for quality, cost-effective health care must be shared among health plans, health systems, providers, and consumers. The provisions of the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act that assure a truly independent appeals system and legal accountability for health plans are reasonable and necessary if we are to have reform that is comprehensive and enforceable for all participants in the health care system.

This bipartisan compromise also includes an important requirement that health plans allow patients to have access to a full range of health care providers, with no discrimination against some providers solely on the basis of type of licensure. ANA also strongly supports the provision assuring that women have direct access to all providers of obstetric and gynecological services.

The American Nurses Association urges you to support the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act of 2001, which will bring about genuine reform in our health care system.

Sincerely,

Rose Gonzalez, MPS, RN
Director, Government Affairs

